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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/917,003	07/27/2001	William D. Giles	DUK185/4-28	9951
4095	7590	10/26/2004	EXAMINER	
VINSON & ELKINS. L.L.P. 1001 FANNIN STREET 2300 FIRST CITY TOWER HOUSTON, TX 77002-6760			HOGAN, MARY C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2123	

DATE MAILED: 10/26/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/917,003	Applicant(s) GILES ET AL.	
	Examiner Mary C Hogan	Art Unit 2123	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 June 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 18 December 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This application has been examined.
2. **Claims 1-30** have been examined and rejected.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

4. **Claims 1-30** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Lupien (Lupien, Tony, "The Virtual Pipeline: Operations Insight Fuels Marketing Decisions", GITA's 23rd Annual Conference and Exhibition, March 26-29, 2000), herein referred to as **Lupien**.
5. As to **Claims 1, 11 and 21**, **Lupien** teaches: a method for integrating and displaying information related to a natural gas pipeline using a computer system comprising:
 - obtaining commercial (**page 2, paragraph 8, lines 1-2**, "gas management (product accounting) systems"), operational (**page 2, paragraph 8, lines 1-2**, "operations systems and SCADA systems), and modeling information about the natural gas pipeline (**page 2, paragraph 8, lines 3-4**, "predictive simulations" and "forecasters"),
 - relating the commercial information to the operational information (**page 2, paragraph 8, line 1**, "nominations", **page 3, paragraph 5**, "scheduled receipts and deliveries" and "confirmed nominations");
 - associating the commercial, operational, and modeling information with a location on a geographic representation of the natural gas pipeline (**page 3, paragraph 1, line 3, page 4, paragraph 1, line 1 and page 4, paragraph 2, line 3**), and
 - displaying a first particular item of information from the commercial, operational, and modeling information along with a geographic representation of the natural gas pipeline on the computer system (**page 4, paragraph 2, line 3**, "map-graph-report-chart format").
6. As to **Claims 2, 12 and 22**, **Lupien** teaches: the method described in claim 1, wherein the first particular item of information is a combination of two individual items of information selected from the commercial, operational, and modeling information (**page 3, paragraph 8, lines 2-3**, display of operating profit).

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7. As to **Claims 3, 13 and 23**, **Lupien** teaches: the method described in claim 1, further comprising: presenting several predefined combinations of the commercial information, operational information, and modeling information (**page 3, paragraphs 7 and 8**); and receiving selection of one of the several predefined combinations of the commercial information, operational information, and modeling information, wherein the selected predefined combination becomes the first particular item of information to be displayed (**page 3, paragraph 8**).
8. As to **Claims 4, 14 and 24**, **Lupien** teaches: the method described in claim 1, further comprising: receiving a request to enlarge a portion of the geographic representation of the natural gas pipeline, wherein the first particular item of information is located in the portion to be enlarged (**page 3, last sentence, page 4, paragraph 2, line 4, “system to detailed granularity”**); obtaining additional items of commercial, operational, and modeling information for the geographic area to be enlarged (**page 4, paragraph 2, lines 4-6**); and displaying the first particular item of information, the additional items of information, and an enlarged portion of the geographic representation of the natural gas pipeline (**page 3, last sentence-page 4, first sentence, page 4, paragraph 2, line 4, “system to detailed granularity”**).
9. As to **Claims 5, 15, and 25**, **Lupien** teaches: the method described in claim 1, wherein the relating step further includes associating gas supplied to and withdrawn from the natural gas pipeline with the commercial information (**page 3, paragraph 5, “scheduled receipts and deliveries” and “confirmed nominations”**, and **paragraph 7, lines 1-2** wherein two or more of these information layers, such as scheduled receipts and deliveries and confirmed nominations can be combined into a synthetic display).
10. As to **Claims 6, 16 and 26**, **Lupien** teaches: the method described in claim 1, wherein the relating step further includes utilizing the modeling information to associate future supplies of gas to and withdrawals of gas from the natural gas pipeline with the commercial information (**page 2, paragraph 8, page 3, paragraphs 5,6 and 7, “market forecast”, “predicted nominations” and “scheduled receipts and deliveries”**, wherein two or more layers of this source information can be combined).
11. As to **Claims 7, 17 and 27**, **Lupien** teaches: a method for integrating and displaying information related to a natural gas pipeline on a computer system, comprising: inserting commercial, operational, and modeling information into a database structure (**page 2, paragraph 9**); receiving new commercial, operational, and modeling information (**page 2, last line, wherein information is dynamic**);

updating the commercial, operational, and modeling information in the database with the new commercial, operational, and modeling information (**page 1, last paragraph, line 4, page 2, paragraph 8, lines 4-5, page 2, last sentence-page 3, first 2 sentences**, wherein data is obtained in real-time and is dynamic, therefore constantly updating the information in the database);

relating the commercial information to the operational information by determining which physical aspects of the natural gas pipeline correspond with particular components of commercial information (**page 2, paragraph 8, line 1, “nominations”, page 3, paragraph 5, “scheduled receipts and deliveries” and “confirmed nominations”**); and

displaying a combination of the commercial, operational, and modeling information on the computer system (**page 3, paragraph 7**).

12. As to **Claims 8, 18 and 28**, Lupien teaches: the method described in claim 7, wherein the displaying step includes displaying commercial and operational data about a particular pipeline related data item up to present time (**page 2, last line-page 3, first 2 lines**), and displaying modeling information about forecast values for the particular pipeline data item into the future (**page 2, paragraph 8, line 3-4, page 3, paragraph 6 and paragraph 7, line 1**).

13. As to **Claims 9, 19 and 29**, Lupien teaches: the method described in claim 7, wherein the relating step includes associating physical gas meters with nomination points (**page 2, paragraph 8, lines 5, page 2, paragraph 8, lines 1 and 2, page 3, paragraphs 5 and 7**, wherein confirmed nominations are obtained from sensors on pipeline and fed to the SCADA system).

14. As to **Claims 10, 20 and 30**, Lupien teaches: the method described in claim 7, further comprising:

obtaining the operational information from a SCADA system associated with the natural gas pipeline (**page 2, paragraph 8, line 2**); and

obtaining the modeling information from a computer modeling system that executes software to predict future supplies of gas to and withdrawals of gas from the natural gas pipeline (**page 1, last paragraph, lines 3-page 2, line 1, page 2, paragraph 8, lines 3-4, page 3, paragraph 6, “predicted nominations”**); and

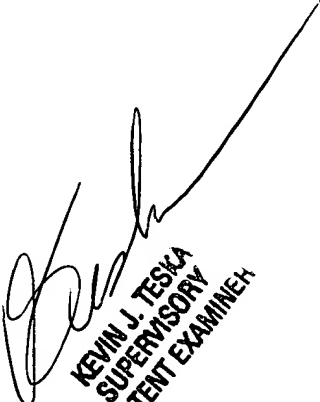
electronically transmitting the operational information and modeling information to a computer system in communication with the database (**page 2, last paragraph-page 3, first paragraph**).

Conclusion

15. The prior art made of record, see PTO 892, and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure, careful consideration must be given prior to Applicant's response to this Office Action.

16. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mary C Hogan whose telephone number is 703-305-7838 until 10/28/04 or 571-272-3712 after 10/28/04. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30AM-5PM Monday-Friday. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kevin Teska can be reached on 703-305-9704. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Mary C Hogan
Examiner
Art Unit 2123



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